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The four areas presented are group and individual intelligence tests, achievement tests, educational grouping procedures, and factors associated with low income. A track system, or any system of grouping, should promote rather than hinder the achievement of both the low-income groups and the higher-income groups.

The present track system in Washington, D.C., has more children of the lower-income groups in the lower tracks. Evaluation shows that children in low-income areas are not less intelligent and that their supposed lower intelligence is not the reason for their being in the lower part of a track system. Rather their neighborhood is such that children of low-income families are not amalgamated into the school community. These schools do not contend with the inherent differences of these children that their experiences prior to school are poor emotionally, socially, and intellectually. Instead, these schools underestimate the children's basic potential and offer less than continued optimum learning comditions and experiences.

In developing tracking systems, certain factors should be considered. These include a reflection of income differences in the neighborhoods, a comparison of different track systems already operating successfully, and a study of the dropout rates in the tracks in different income areas in the city.

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of white citizens saying that Negroes ought to live in mixed Negro-white neighborhoods as of 1963 rose to 63 per cent in 1964.

The local educational turmoil over de facto school segregation policy may have had some other impacts in Portland on the policy perspectives of both whites and Negroes. There was a small but noticeable increase in uncertainty ("don't know") on the part of whites by 1964 who had earlier in the 1963 study disagreed with the proposition that it would be better for Negro children to go to schools that have more white pupils. Negro citizens, for reasons that are not clear but perhaps have to do with the complexity of the political issue over school policy, similarly evidenced an increase in uncertainty and disapproval of that general notion.

In any event, and in summary, the 1964 survey underlined the policy gulf over school desegregation-improvement policies between the white and Negro communities in Portland, Oregon, particularly over the issue of transportation out of the ghetto. That policy preference has not become something that Negro citizens (and a few white groups) have been willing to trade for model schools inside the ghetto nor something that the school authorities have been willing to institute on a mass basis at public expense. Sooner, rather than later, we would hope, the schools might join with other community institutions in a direct, massive destruction of de facto segregation in various areas of Portland life rather than cling to a principle that racial integration in schools or wherever is not a vital part of the process of education itself. At the same time that a policy deadlock seems to have occurred in the school area, our findings suggest that the white citizens of the city have gained increasing respect and some additional tolerance for Negroes as fellow citizens and potential neighbors, perhaps making it more likely that the defacto school segregation issue can be resolved more quickly than it otherwise might be.

Do not mistake the child for his symptom.

Erik H. Erikson, 1963

THE TRACK SYSTEM IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Elias Blake, Jr.

The author is Assistant Professor of Education, Howard University.

On February 4, 1965, the school board of the District of Columbia conducted a public hearing on the high school track system. Following is the text of a statement presented to the school board. The next issue of Integrated Education *will contain texts of several other, shorter statements. [For background, see Carl F. Hansen, "A Defense of the Track System," Integrated Education, June-July, 1964, pp. 48-49.]*

In this article four points will be developed and their implications discussed. 1. Intelligence tests of any kind, group or individual, have been thoroughly discredited as measures of innate ability, mental capacity, mental ability, or limitations in intellectual functioning. It is therefore considered bad educational practice to use I.Q. scores to explain or justify

low levels of achievement. 2. Intelligence tests and achievement tests are now considered to be measures of the same thing: Present level of achievement in school. Such achievement whether at first grade, fourth grade, or sixth grade cannot be taken as evidence of limited mental ability or capacity except in cases where opportunities for learning are optimal. 3. Educational grouping procedures which use achievement measures such as the I. Q. as a part of their rationale may reflect the clear differences in the economic and educational background of students which already exist. Such a system of homogeneous grouping may discriminate against poorer children and in favor of more affluent children. It is a circular argument to say poorer children are not achieving in school and to use I. Q. scores to explain why. To make that argument is to say poorer children do not achieve because they have low achievement test scores. 4. Factors associated with low income (low income levels, overcrowding and broken homes) are under severe attack as adequate or correct explanations for the fact that school achievement is lower in less wealthy neighborhoods than in wealthier neighborhoods.

The evidence on the I. Q. comes from leading authorities in the field of educational measurement who were and still are influential in developing and advancing theory and research on measurement of ability in humans. The evidence that grouping procedures based on an older and outdated use of the I. Q. may reflect existing differences in education and income will come from honors and basic track placements in the District of Columbia public school system and conclusive evidence from two other cities. The evidence that neighborhood factors associated with poverty do not explain low achievement comes from a study in central Harlem and the opinions of leading innovators in the education of children from low income areas.

This report takes no position for or against ability grouping. Its purpose is to raise important questions and suggest how the present track system should be evaluated. The position here is that an adequate evaluation has not been made of the track system too; many questions about its operation as an educational device are unanswered.

THE IMPROPER USE OF I. Q. TESTS

"It is common practice for teachers to compare the score obtained on an intelligence test and that obtained on an achievement test. If the former (I. Q.) is higher, the student is labeled an underachiever; if the latter (achievement test) is higher, he is labeled an overachiever. *This practice cannot be justified.*"[1]

Lee J. Cronbach,[2] past president of the American Psychological Association, indicates why the practice of using I. Q. scores to justify or explain achievement levels is bad educational practice. He discovered that typical intelligence tests and achievement tests overlap in what they measure to about 71 percent.

Anne Anastasi, author of one of the most widely used texts on psychological testing, makes the following statement about the Stanford-Binet Individual Intelligence test: "In interpreting the I. Q. it should be borne in mind that the Stanford-Binet is primarily a measure of *scholastic aptitude* and heavily loaded with verbal functions, especially at the upper levels. Individuals with a language handicap as well as those whose strongest abilities lie along non-verbal lines will thus score low on such a test."[3]

The key phrase is scholastic aptitude and the emphasis is the author's. Scholastic aptitude is a term used to indicate a kind of *developed* ability as opposed to a kind of potential or fixed trait. The Binet is one of the most popular I. Q. tests and is often considered to be one of the most accurate measures of "mental ability." Group I. Q. tests are considerably less accurate in measuring attained ability to do school work.

In a standard source on psychological tests the following statement is made about the group I. Q. test widely used in the District of Columbia Public Schools: "As stated in the manual for each of the three tests, the purpose seems highly abstract and somewhat out of step with a modern definition of intelligence." The modern definition of intelligence as a form of achievement was given by Cronbach and Anatasi. The reviewer goes on to say "certainly the statement made in Beta and Gamma Manuals that 'the actual rate of progress of pupils through school is the most appropriate criterion of the test' cannot be justified." In other words the test maker uses the circular argument to justify his test. In another comment the reviewer said: "School personnel . . . should be especially cautious in applying the test findings to children who need remedial help in reading or the language arts."[4]

Another and independent reviewer in the same source says: "A number of specific applications of the tests are suggested. The first of these is to discover which pupils are capable of doing better school work than they are doing and to discover which pupils may be attempting work beyond their capacity. In light of recent evidence concerning the distribution of achievement ratios (overlap between I. Q. and achievement tests) or the (lack of) differences between tests of ability and achievement, it would seem that this application of this test should be treated with some reserve. It is indeed doubtful whether, for the normal purposes of classification and guidance within a school, teachers will find the tests more serviceable than measures of attainment."[5] The last statement simply means that the test is no more than another achievement test and tells nothing about whether a child's achievement is due to mental ability, poor motivation, or good or bad teaching.

This is not to say that the test should be discarded or replaced; it must be used properly and its limitations clearly understood by decision makers who determine how children are placed in the track system. The most extreme caution must be exercised in using I.Q. tests for placement of children from low income areas because these children's basic potential is most seriously underestimated by any form of test based on school achievement.

Fishman and Clifford addressed themselves to the issue of the use of ability tests on the poor. They indicate that "here (among the poorer groups) our mass testing programs cannot claim to unearth the talent that the social order has suppressed. Tests largely confirm talent that the school has already recognized." They go on to say that with disadvantaged groups, "Intellectual achievement is low regardless of basic potential, therefore, developed ability and attainment can no longer be considered as good indices of basic intellectual potential." [6]

> Last summer's riots were not race riots, they were outbursts of class aggression in a society where class and color definitions are converging disastrously.
>
> Bayard Rustin, February, 1965

Phillip E. Vernon, a leading figure in educational measurement in England also addressed himself to the question of extreme care in making judgments about people's limitations. He writes: "Clearly, too, caution should be exercised regarding any statements which imply that a considerable portion of the populations is always going to be intellectually incapable of absorbing the higher reaches of education. There is still a lot of truth in this, but the trouble is in determining which members of the population fall into this category."[7]

In any ability grouping in a school system it should not be true that those most often judged to have little

chance of high or above average achievement are the children of the poorer groups. In my estimation the test of a track system or any system of grouping is whether or not it promotes rather than hinders the best possible achievement of the low income groups, as well as the higher income groups. Ability grouping is not promoting the best achievement of the poor if more of them are put into tracks where low levels of achievement are expected and accepted by teachers and administrators.

There is evidence to support the contention that in actual practice the present track system may put more of the children of the lower income groups into the lower tracks.

The adjoining table shows senior high schools in the District of Columbia ranked by a combination rank of the income and education level in the census tract surrounding the school. There are more placements in the basic track in the lower income levels that at the higher income levels. The table also shows the top-ranked three schools by education and income have fewer general track placements than the bottom four schools in education and income. Basic and general are the two lower tracks; regular and honors are the two higher tracks. The differences in track placements in the junior high —not shown here— are even more striking with the highest ranked junior high school in education and income having 2.5 percent of its enrollment in the basic track and the lowest ranked junior high school having 36 percent of its enrollment in the basic track.

Clearly these facts do not constitute conclusive evidence that the track system is not working properly; they do raise questions about the track placements in low income areas. Let it be clear I do not question the validity of the placements in the high income areas; I do question the validity of the placements in the low income areas of the city. However, many additional facts are needed before the issue can be resolved.

The questions to be raised about these placements have to do with whether once placed in a lower track does the child have an optimum chance to move up. Related questions are how soon are placements made before junior high school and how permanent are the placements once made. Special breakdowns should give these facts by income areas over the city.

At the junior high and senior high school level there is evidence that suggests a certain rigidity to placements once they are made. For example only 3.1 percent of the junior

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRACK PLACEMENTS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE MEDIAN INCOME AND EDUCATION LEVELS IN THE CENSUS TRACT SURROUNDING EACH SCHOOL

Family Median Income	Median Level of Education	Income Education Rank Sr. High Schools	% in Basic Track	% in General Track	% in Regular Track	% in Track Honors
$10,734	12.9	1	- -	7.8	75.1	17.1
8,649	12.6	2	6.6	34.6	46.1	12.7
7,650	11.9	3	5.1	31.6	52.5	10.8
6,033	11.7	4	5.5	57.2	32.5	4.4
5,250	11.6	5	7.4	53.7	34.3	4.6
4,944	10.7	6	12.0	73.5	13.6	0.9
5,173	9.4	7.5	4.9	39.9	49.2	6.0
4,627	11.3	7.5	6.5	54.5	34.8	4.2
4,431	10.6	9	18.2	56.4	22.4	3.0
4,907	8.8	10	12.0	55.5	28.6	3.9
3,872	8.6	11	16.7	68.1	15.2	- -
Citywide Placements			9.0	49.6	35.7	5.8

high pupils got transfers from September, 1961 to 1963; only 6.3 percent of the senior high pupils were transferred in the same period. Even with cross-tracking between tracks, the issue of rigidity needs to be resolved by more adequate data which include statistics on whether the rigidity of placements is related to education and income backgrounds of students. It would be particularly important to know that regardless of income and education background all children have an equal chance to move up or down within the tracks.

	Senior High	Junior High
*Total in all Tracks 1961-63	27,139	54,538
**Transfers to all Tracks 1961-63	1,721	1,683
Transfer as percent of total	6.3%	3.1%
Stay in Same Track	93.7%	96.9%

*D. C. Public Schools, Department of Research, January 7, 1965.

**Hansen, Carl, Review of the Track System, Presented to the Board of Education, January 13, 1964. p. 30.

A point that must be studied closely is the track placement and movement within tracks before junior and senior high school. At this lower level maximum efforts to give all children an equal opportunity to achieve are of the essence. In fact, recent research indicates that it is possibly dangerous to do any grouping except after *thorough clinical evaluations which extend over a period of time and if possible under some controlled conditions which allow for further evaluation over a period of time.*

The research that relates to the dangers of early grouping deals with the plotting of I. Q. scores of groups of children from early childhood through adolescence. The research studies of Honzik, Richards, Sontag, and Bayley[8] generally agree that I. Q. test scores do not tend to be stable in the same child when he is tested each year from infancy to adulthood. The children tend to be most variable in their early years with a leveling out and less fluctuations beyond the age of 11 or 12. A remarkable case study by Richards[9] showed how such things as family fortunes and father disability influenced the I. Q. measurements over the years.

Given the variability among young children and the wide differences in experience background (which strongly influences the I. Q. score: individual or group test) and the limitations of the instruments, the abolition of early testing for purposes of school placement needs to be seriously considered. It needs to be considered against the backdrop that mental testing gives little real evidence about the educability of any young child except one who is obviously retarded. Tests give reasonably good evidence of real potentiality only if a child had an optimum and/or very adequate set of emotional, social and physically healthful experiences prior to and during the period in which he is tested.

My concern here is that large numbers of children do not fulfill the assumptions just stated. Then what are the purposes of the tests? Some say to give the child with experience background handicaps a chance to catch up, by early identification and help. If this is true within the present system of grouping, studies should show that after first placement at the elementary school level very large numbers of children whose first test scores are low should begin to show improvement in their I. Q. and achievement scores. I repeat: show improvement in their I. Q. scores if their first scores are low.

Given the facts about income and education background of the students in lower tracks at the secondary school level, it needs to be established if larger proportions of the children in the low income areas have lower elementary school I. Q., reading readiness and achievement scores. Under the influence of an enriching educational experience in

school the proportion of children in these schools with low scores should decrease.

Let me be understood. I am not saying the gaps in elementary school achievement between more and less affluent children can be closed by the end of grade school. I am saying their school performance, including I. Q. scores, should be moving up as opposed to remaining stable or going down. If the track system contributes to such a pattern, good; if it does not, some extreme modifications should be made.

Answers can be gotten to such questions and they are at the heart of so-called equal educational opportunity. We have to assume that innate potential is equally distributed throughout all income groups; otherwise we open the door to race and class superiority and inferiority explanations of differences in achievement. In other words, there should not be a disproportionate number of organically healthy but dull-minded children born into poor families any more than in other families.

Following such an assumption how does one justify larger proportions of these children in the lower tracks of the school system? Generally, it is argued that one cannot expect children who suffer from the ills of poverty to achieve as well in school.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THREE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH POVERTY AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT*

	Family Income	Overcrowded Housing	Broken Homes
Third Grade Performance	+0.03	−0.06	+0.12
I. Q. Deterioration	+0.21	−0.13	+0.14
Sixth Grade Performance	+0.22	−0.15	+0.21

*Youth in the Ghetto, A study of the consequences of powerlessness and a blueprint for change, by Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., New York, 1964, p. 213.

Serious doubt has been cast on this explanation of why children don't achieve.

In central Harlem a very detailed study was done of school achievement. When different school areas *within* Harlem were ranked by income level, overcrowding and number of broken homes, very little difference was found in the achievement or I. Q. scores of children from these areas. (See table on top of page) The report interpreted the lack of a sizable correlation between home factors and school achievement as reflecting the fact that the "schools adapt themselves to the surrounding community, making assumptions about the capacity of the students coming from the community"[10]

Such an interpretation was partly based on the fact that 53 percent of the teachers, 62 percent of the assistant principals, and 45 percent interviewed *felt that "one-fourth or less of their pupils had college potential."* "The major reason why an increasing number of central Harlem pupils fall below their grade levels is that substandard performance is expected of them." The report further states: "The majority of the children continue along in their regular classes where standards have been set to 'meet their ability.' Less is expected of such pupils; they are rewarded for poorer performance, and the result is a steadily increasing gap between what they accomplish and what pupils at their grade levels should accomplish."[11]

The table on the following pages supports: (1) that achievement is low in poorer areas; and (2) that this failure tends to be associated with income levels in a community. The table comes from New York. A report done by an advisory panel to the Chicago school board[12] also supports the pattern shown in the table.

The Central Harlem study is not alone in suggesting that the "What can you expect—look at their backgrounds" argument itself may be more cause of some academic retardation than an explanation. Samuel Shepard, leader of the Banneker Group Program in St. Louis, tells all who will listen how the basic problem was not one of changing the child and neighborhood before raising achievement; it was changing the view of child held by the teachers and the view the families held of themselves. The Higher Horizons Project in a low income area in New York worked no miracles or made no unknown innovation; it simply invoked all the trappings and substance of a quality education similar to that given in upper income areas. The story of student response is now legend; their achievement began to move upward *despite the same outside-of-school environment.* Jacob Landers, who was a director of Higher Horizons, makes the following provocative statement: "The individual child . . . must be the focus of all instructional and administrative efforts, as his progress must be the major focus of all evaluation. If he learns the school program is successful; if he does not then the program is unsuccessful."[13]

The strongest statement about the ability of children to achieve despite their background was made by Martin Deutsch whose work is often misread to justify non-achievement by poorer children: "Examination of the literature yields no explanation, no justification for any child with an intact brain, and who is not severely disturbed, not to learn all the basic scholastic skills. The failure of such child to learn is the failure of such schools to develop curricula consistent with the environmental experiences of the children and their subsequent initial abilities and disabilities."[14]

It is clear that the men who have worked with the children of lower income groups and have believed fervently in their ability to learn have been successful in raising ability levels as measured by school performance. The belief in the fundamental ability of all children who come into the classroom results in an optimum educational experience inside the school. Until a school system has developed the best possible education for these children, the question about outside factors influencing their achievement remains unanswerable.

To summarize: My great concern is for an evaluation of the track system by some reasonable scientific criteria. I am not against academic grouping; it is necessary for some purposes. My greatest concern is for the effects of the grouping procedures on the very young and the very poor.

This report has demonstrated that current psychological research supports the generalization that potential ability to achieve cannot be adequately determined by I. Q. tests. The weight of the research makes clear the I. Q. cannot be used to explain low levels of achievement; the I. Q. test *is* an achievement test. I. Q. tests are most accurate when applied to children who have had optimal educational experiences inside and outside the school; they are least accurate and tend to underestimate the basic potential of poorer children. A relationship has been established between levels of income and placement in the various tracks. Proportionately, a large number of children from the lower income areas are in the two lowest tracks. The data are not conclusive, but the relationship is clearly there, especially at the junior high and senior high level.

It is certain that I. Q. tests underestimate the abilities of poorer children when the two following conditions exist:

(1) Experiences prior to school are poor in either emotional, social, or intellectual content.

(2) Experiences within school furnish less than continuing optimum learning conditions and experiences.

If conditions inside a school are inferior and conditions outside a school are inferior who can conclude what

is causing low school performance?

Against this backdrop a thorough study of the track system is recommended. Such a study can be completed within six to eight months after a group has begun to do it. In Chicago a study of the school system along lines suggested here was begun at the end of August, 1963, completed by March 31, 1964 and submitted to the Chicago board of education.

The following factors should be carefully studied:

1. Do track placements reflect income differences in the neighborhoods where the schools are located? Special and detailed study must be made of the progress through school of first graders adjudged to be of low ability in low income areas. It must be ascertained that first placement does not result in a permanent level of low achievement for the vast majority of these children.

2. A study of the achievement within the same track in different income areas of the city: Do studies in the general track in low income areas achieve at the same level as students in the general track in high income areas? The same sort of study should be done on each track — basic, general, college preparatory and honors. If comparable levels of achievement are not shown the system needs modification.

3. A study of the drop-out rates in the tracks in different in come areas of the city: Special emphasis should be put on the junior high school level and the basic track. The lowering rate of basic track students in high school could be the result of larger numbers of basic track students leaving school in the low income areas.

6. Participation of children in the various tracks in the social life of the school should be given thorough study. At least one study shows that participation often follows the grouping, with higher groups showing more praticipation and lower groups showing less participation.

7. A thorough study must be made of the actual grouping practices with special emphasis on the use of I. Q. tests. All schools must give up using the I. Q. as a single number explanation of achievement potential.

It is clear such a study demands not just equal educational opportunity but equal educational results. We often say we believe in basic equality of *all* children. If this is so, the track system should be moving toward equality of results. Either we believe that all groups in the society have equal intellectual potential or we do not. If we believe in it then the achievement gaps between the poorer and the more affluent children should be closing, not remaining the same nor widening.

Unless the schools are making a beginning on closing this gap, the American Dream is a deception for our poorer children. The school must make certain it is not a party to reinforcing the effects of race and class differences in the broader society.

If the track system diminishes the effects of poor income and educational background, it is to be commended. If it does not, it needs drastic modification. I have proposed a way in which these issues can be constructively settled.

In other cities pressures from outside the school board and school administration have resulted in much disruption and unnecessary ill feeling. Let us not make the same mistake here. Within eight months, less than another school year, all sides can sit down together and work out a solution on the basis of the evidence. Let us begin.

[1]Morris Eason, *Psychological Foundations of Education*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964, p. 311.

[2]L. J. Cronbach, *Essentials of Psychological Testing*, New York: Hafper and Brothers, 1960.

[3]Anne Anatasi, *Psychological Testing*, New York: The McMillan Company, 1961, p. 208

[4]Welty D. Lefever, Professor of Education U.C.L.A. review of the Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Tests in Buros, O. K., *Mental Measurements Yearbook*, Highland Park, N. J.: Gryphon Press, 1959, p. 497-498.

[5]Alfred Yates, Senior Research Officer, National Foundation for Educational Research, London, England, Test Review of Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test, Buros, O. K., *Mental Measurements Yearbook*, p. 499-500.

[6]Joshua A. Fishman and Paul I. Clifford "What Can Mass Testing Programs Do For-and-To the Pursuit of Excellence in American Education" *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 34, 1964, p. 67-68.

[7]Phillip E. Vernon, "Education and the Psychology of Individual Differences" *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 28, 1958, p. 107.

[8]Nancy Bayles, "Consistency and variablity in the growth of intelligence from birth to 18 years," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, Vol. 75, 1949, p. 165-196. Honzik, M.P., *et al.*, "The stability of Mental Test performance between two and eighteen years" *Journal of Exp. Educ.*, Vol. 17, 1948, p. 309-324.

[9]Richards, T. W., "Mental test performance as a reflection of the child's current life situation" *Child Development*, Vol. 22, 1951, p. 221-233. Sontag, L. W., *et al.*, "Mental Growth and Personality Development: A Longitudinal Study," *Monographs Soc. for Res. in Child Dev.*, Vol. 23, 1958, No. 2

[10]*Youth in the Ghetto*, Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., 1964, p. 213-214.

[11]Ibid p. 238.

[12]*Report to the Board of Education, City of Chicago*, by The Advisory Panel on Integration in the Public Schools, March 31, 1964.

[13]Jacob Landers, "The Responsibilities of Teachers and Administrators" *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 34, Winter 1965, p. 64.

[14]Cited in *Integrated Education*, Vol. 2, No. 6, December, January, 1964-65, p. 34.

> Throughout my whole elementary school career, I do not recall one mention of Italy or the Italian language or what famous Italians had done in the world, with the possible exception of Columbus, who was pretty popular in America. We soon got the idea that "Italian" meant something inferior, and a barrier was erected between children of Italian origin and their parents. This was the accepted process of Americanization. We were becoming Americans by learning how to be ashamed of our parents.
>
> Leonard Covello,
> *The Heart Is the Teacher*

MOTHERS AND SCHOOLS OF THE GHETTO

Sarah T. Curwood

The writer is Associate Professor of Sociology, Rhode Island College, Providence, and is presently on leave with the Massachusetts Committee on Children and Youth, Boston.

Segregated housing, the neighborhood school, and permissive transfers have spawned defacto segregated schools in many northern cities. Providence, Rhode Island, has two such elementary schools, Thomas A. Doyle and Jenkins Street schools with more than 85% enrollment of Negro pupils. They are both located in a district that is ecologically speaking, a desirable location on the east side of Providence, adjacent to the Brown University area and good housing. Their present district lines encompass an urban renewal area,